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'Misunderstanding' Should Be Cleared

A FEW MORE WORDS should be spoken in the controversy that arose over certain paragraphs in Richard Nixon's book "Six Crises". And they should be spoken by Allen Dulles in response to direct questions, if necessary.

Mr. Nixon in his book told of the dilemma in which he was placed when Senator Kennedy, his opponent, advocated assistance for "the forces fighting for freedom in exile in the mountains of Cuba".

Nixon knew all about the plans to arm the Cuban exiles and he had been told by President Eisenhower that Kennedy had been briefed with Nixon on international and domestic affairs. But before replying to the Kennedy campaign statement, Nixon sent Interior Secretary Seaton to the White House to find out whether Kennedy had been informed of the secret operations. Seaton reported that the candidate had been so informed.

Now, with the book published, and

these facts disclosed, the Warren White House denies that Kennedy knew about the invasion force and Dulles comes up with a statement to the effect that there had been "a misunderstanding".

LEAVING IT THERE is a word factory. "Just what does Mr. Dulles' mealy-mouthed word 'misunderstanding' mean?" asks Raymond Moley. "Who is misunderstanding whom? Does he mean that the 1962 White House statement is due to a lapse of memory? Does Mr. Nixon misunderstand what the 2 1/2-hour briefing (given Kennedy by Dulles) covered? If so, how does Dulles explain that he omitted from that briefing the most critical operation in which the CIA was involved?"

These are pertinent questions and it is not fair to Mr. Nixon to leave them unanswered. But then, we never have found Nixon's opposition willing to give him a square meal.